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AN
ABRIDGMENT
OF THE
HISTORY
OF THE
BIBLE.

By the Rev. Mr OSTERVALD.



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HISTORY



BY J. B. L. E.

By the Rev. Mr. OSTERVAALD.



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CHAP. I.

*Which takes in the Time that passed from
the Creation of the World, to the Flood.*

THE World was (a) created
about Four Thousand Years
before the Birth of JESUS
CHRIST. In six Days GOD made all
the Creatures that are therein; and on
the sixth Day He created *Adam*, who
was the first Man. He made him after
his own Image, and gave him Dominion
over the rest of the Creatures. *Adam* af-
ter his Creation (b) was put into the ter-

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restrial

(a) Gen. I.

(b) Gen. II.

restrial Paradise, otherwise called the Garden of *Eden*, with *Eve* his Wife, who was formed out of one of his Ribs: And they would have lived happy in that Place, if they had continued in their Innocence, and kept the Law that God had given them.

BUT *Adam* and *Eve* (a) being fallen into Rebellion, thro' the Temptation of the Devil, and having broken the Commandment that GOD had given them, not to eat of the Fruit of a Tree which was in the Garden of *Eden*, which the Scripture calls, *The tree of knowledge of good and evil*; they lost their Innocence and their Happiness together, were made subject to Death, and driven by GOD out of the terrestrial Paradise. By this Fall of *Adam*, Sin and Death entered into the World; and all Men had been for ever miserable, if GOD had not taken Pity on them. But GOD immediately promised, (b) that *the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*; that is, that Men should be delivered from Sin, from Death, and from the Power of the Devil, by JESUS CHRIST, who should be born of a Virgin.

IN the Book of *Genesis*, (c) *Moses* tells

us,
(a) Gen. II. (b) Ch. III. 15. (c) Ch. IV, and V.

us, who were the Children and Descendants of *Adam*. We see by the History of those Times, that the Life of Man was then much longer than it is now, and that they lived many Hundreds of Years: But it may be also observed, that Sin began to reign in the World presently after the Creation. *Cain*, the Son of *Adam*, slew his Brother *Abel*, and had a wicked Posterity. Nevertheless God was known to and worshipped by the Patriarchs, and especially in the Family of *Seth*, who was one of the Sons of *Adam*. Among these Patriarchs, the Scripture makes mention of *Enoch*, whom God took out of the World, so that he died not: God having been pleased thereby to crown his Piety, and to teach Men that there are Rewards after this Life for those that live well. But in Process of Time, (a) the Posterity of *Seth* was corrupted likewise, and mingled with the Wicked. The Earth was filled with Crimes, and the Corruption grew so great and general, that God sent the Flood, which drowned the whole World, *Noah* excepted, who being a Man that feared God, was

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with

(a) Gen. VI, and VII.

with his Family preserved from this Inundation; God having commanded him to build an Ark, in which he was shut up when the Flood came. The Memory of this Deluge is preserved, not only in the Holy Scriptures, but also among divers Nations of the World, as we may find in many ancient Histories. The Flood happened One Thousand Six Hundred Fifty six Years after the Creation of the World.

CH A P. H.

Of the Time between the Flood and the Call of Abraham.

NO A H being come out of the Ark (*a*) after the Deluge, God made a Covenant with him, and gave a new Sanction to the Law of Nature, in order to turn Men from Wickedness and Vice. Noah had three Sons, (*b*) *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japheth*; and all the World was afterwards peopled by their Posterity. The Descendants of *Shem* settled chiefly in *Asia*, those of *Ham* spread for the most part in *Africa*, and those of *Japheth*.

(*a*) Gen. VIII, and IX. (*b*) Ch. IX. 18, 19. Ch. X.

Japheth in *Europe*. This is the Original of all the People of the World, as may be seen more at large in the tenth Chapter of *Genesis*.

SOME time after the Flood, (a) Men undertook to build the Tower of *Babel*, but GOD confounded their Language, so that not understanding one another any longer, they were dispersed into divers Countries. Idolatry began about this Time to prevail, and then GOD was pleased to choose a People, among whom the true Religion might be preserved. For this Purpose He called *Abraham*, who lived in the City of *Ur* in *Chaldea*. He appointed him to leave the Country wherein he was born, He engaged him to serve Him, and fear Him; He commanded him to go into the Land of *Canaan*, and He promised to give that Country to his Descendants, to multiply his Posterity; and that the *Messias* should be born of his Race. The Call of *Abraham* happened Four Hundred and Twenty seven Years after the Flood.

C H A P. III.

Of the Time between the Call of Abraham, and the going of the Children of Israel out of Egypt.

A *Brabam* (a) being come into the Land of *Canaan*, tarried there some time with *Lot* his Nephew, without having any Child. This Country was then inhabited by the *Canaanites*, who were an idolatrous and a very wicked People; particularly the Inhabitants of *Sodom* (where *Lot* dwelt) were so wicked (b) and had committed Sins so horrible, that God destroyed that City, after that He had brought *Lot*, with his Wife and Daughters, out of it. Fire from Heaven fell down upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, so that these Cities, with their Inhabitants, and all the neighbouring Country, were burnt to Ashes.

WHEN *Abraham* was an Hundred Years of Age, *Isaac* his Son was (c) born, by a supernatural Power. *Isaac* was the Father of *Jacob*; and *Jacob* had twelve Sons, who were the Heads of

(a) Gen. XII, &c. (b) Ch. XIX. (c) Ch. XXI.

of the twelve Tribes or Families of the Children of *Israel*. The two most considerable of these Tribes were afterwards, the Tribe of *Levi*, from which the Priests and Ministers of Religion were taken; and the Tribe of *Judah*, which was the most powerful, which was for a great while possessed of the Royal Authority, and was to subsist till the coming of JESUS CHRIST, from which also JESUS CHRIST was to be born.

J O S E P H, (a) one of the Sons of *Jacob*, having been sold and carried into *Egypt*, through the Jealousy and Hatred of his Brethren, GOD raised him up to the chiefest Dignity of that Kingdom, by the Means of the King of the Country. Some Years after, *Jacob*, the Father of *Joseph*, was constrained by the Famine that was in the Land of *Canaan*, to go and sojourn in *Egypt*, with all his Family. About this Time lived *Job*, a Man illustrious for his Piety, and Patience under Afflictions.

AFTER the Death of *Jacob* (b) and *Joseph*, the Children of *Israel* encreased

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and

(a) Gen. XXXVII, &c. (b) Exod. I, &c.

TO *An ABRIDGMENT of*

and multiplied so exceedingly in *Egypt*, that King *Pharaoh* became jealous of them, and endeavoured to destroy them. But *GOD* sent *Moses*, who having wrought many Miracles, and smote *Egypt* with ten Plagues, obliged *Pharaoh* to let the Children of *Israel* go out of his Territories. This Departure of the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, happened Four Hundred and Thirty Years after the Call of *Abraham*.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Time between the going out of Egypt, and the Building of Solomon's Temple.

THE Children of *Israel* being come out of *Egypt*, walked upon (*a*) dry Land through the Red Sea; and *Pharaoh*, who pursued them, attempting to go through it after them, was there drowned with all his Army. Fifty Days after the Deliverance from *Egypt*, *GOD* published the (*b*) Ten Commandments of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*. He gave afterwards the political Laws to *Moses*, as also the ceremonial Laws which

(*a*) *Exod. XIII, XIV, &c.* (*b*) *Exod. XX, &c.*

which the *Israelites* were to observe. God did not suffer the Children of *Israel* to enter into the Land of *Canaan* immediately after their coming out of *Egypt*, but they staid in the Wilderness forty Years, under the Conduct of *Moses*.

MOSES dying at the End of these forty Years (a) *Joshua* succeeded him; and after having subdued the Nations and Kings that inhabited the Land of *Canaan*, he settled the *Israelites* in their Stead. After the Death of *Joshua*, this People were governed by the Judges that God raised from time to time, until the Prophet *Samuel* (who was the last of the Judges) set up *Saul*, the first King of the *Israelites*. After *Saul*, reigned *David*, who was both a King and a Prophet; to whom succeeded *Solomon* his Son, who built the Temple of *Jerusalem*, Four Hundred and Fourscore Years after the coming out of *Egypt*, and about a Thousand Years before the coming of *JESUS CHRIST*.

C H A P.

(a) *Josh. I, &c.*

C H A P. V.

Of the Time between the Building of Solomon's Temple, and the Captivity of Babylon.

AFTER Solomon's Death, (a) *Reboboam* his Son being set on the Throne, ten Tribes of *Israel* revolted, so that he ruled over two Tribes only, which were those of *Judab* and *Benjamin*. Thus, there were two Kingdoms formed, the one called the Kingdom of *Israel*, which comprehended the ten revolted Tribes, the other called the Kingdom of *Judab*, which consisted of the two Tribes that remained faithful to *Reboboam*.

THE Kingdom of *Israel* subsisted about Two Hundred and Fifty Years: *Jeroboam* was the first King of it. This Prince, fearing that his Subjects would return to the Obedience of *Reboboam*, King of *Judab*, when they should go to *Jerusalem* on the solemn Festivals to worship God in the Temple, and to offer their Sacrifices there, set up a false Worship in his Kingdom. He made two golden

(a) 1 Kings XII, &c.

golden Calves, which they worshipped under the Name of the God of *Israel*. He appointed solemn Feasts and Priests; so that in the Reign of *Jeroboam* and his Successors, Idolatry was established in the Kingdom of *Israel*. All the Kings of *Israel* were Idolators, and kept up the false Worship which *Jeroboam* had established. God sent several Prophets to the ten Tribes, to turn them from their Sins, and to preserve the Knowledge of himself among them. The most eminent of these Prophets was *Elijah*: He prophesied in the Time of *Abab*, who was one of the wickedest of the Kings of *Israel*. At last, the Kingdom (a) of the ten Tribes was destroyed, and *Samaria*, their capital City, was taken in the Time of *Hosea*, the last King of *Israel*, by *Salmanasar* King of *Assyria*, who carried away the ten Tribes into his own Kingdom, from whence they were dispersed into divers Countries, and have never since been settled again in their own Land.

THE Kingdom of *Judab* lasted an Hundred and Thirty Years longer than that of *Israel*. The capital City of this King-

(a) 2 Kings XVII.

Kingdom was *Jerusalem*, where the true God was served in the Temple of *Solomon*. But Idolatry crept in also into the Kingdom of *Judab*. GOD raised up Prophets from Time to Time, who opposed the Errors and Sins of that People, who threatned them with the Judgments of God, and foretold the coming of the Messias. *Isaiab* was one of the most eminent of these Prophets. There were also some good Kings, who endeavoured to abolish Idolatry, as *Jehoshaphat*, *Hiezekiah*, *Josiab*, and some others. But the People continuing (a) in their Sins, God, after He had long threatned them, and afflicted them at sundry Times by the neighbouring Kings, destroyed also the Kingdom of *Judab*. *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* besieged *Jerusalem* in the Reign of *Zedekiah*, the last King of *Judab*. He took it, and burnt it with the Temple, and carried away the People to *Babylon*, about Four Hundred and Twenty Years after *Solomon* had laid the Foundation of the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and Five Hundred and Fourscore Years before the Birth of our LORD.

C H A P.

(a) 2 Kings XXV.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Time between the Captivity of Babylon, and JESUS CHRIST.

TH E *Babylonish* Captivity lasted Seventy Years, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* had foretold (a) it should. When these Seventy Years were expired, the *Jews* (b) returned into their own Country by the Leave of *Cyrus*, King of *Persia*, under the Conduct of *Zorobabel*, to rebuild the Temple of *Jerusalem*. But in this they were interrupted by the neighbouring Nations, and this Work was delayed to the Time of *Darius*, King of *Persia*, who commanded that the Temple, and the Service of God, should be set up again. The Prophets *Haggai* and *Zechariah* lived at that Time, and they exhorted the *Jews* to labour in building the Temple. Some Years afterwards, (c) *Nehemiah* went into *Judea* by the Permission of King *Artaxerxes*. He caused the Walls of *Jerusalem* to be built, and restored Order and civil Government in that City.

FROM

(a) Jer. XXV. 11, 12. (b) Dan. IX. 2 Efd.
I, IV, V, &c. (c) Neh. I, &c.

FROM the rebuilding of (a) *Jerusalem*, in the Reign of *Darius*, to the Destruction of that City, which happened after the coming of JESUS CHRIST, there was Seventy Weeks of Years; that is to say, Four Hundred and Ninety Years, according to the Prediction of the Prophet *Daniel*. The *Jews* being returned into their own Country, were for some Time subject to the Kings of *Persia*, and afterwards to the Kings of *Syria*. They were exposed to divers Persecutions, whereof the last and most cruel, was that of King *Antiochus*, (b) who plundered and profaned the Temple of *Jerusalem*, and made use of Torments in order to force the *Jews* to renounce their Religion, as may be seen in the History of the *Maccabees*. This was he that forced *Mattathias*, and many *Jews*, to enter into a Covenant together for the Preservation of their Religion and Liberty. They gained many Victories by the Courage and Conduct of *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Jonathan*, both Sons of *Mattathias*. Having recovered their Liberty, and again set up the Exercise of their Religion, they were a long Time

under

(a) Dan. IX. 24. Matt. XXIV. 15. Luke XXI. 20. (b) 1 Macc. I. 2 Macc. V, VI, VII.

under the Government of the Priests, who succeeded *Judas* and *Jonathan*, and took the Title of Kings. These are they who are called *Asmoneans*. At last, the *Jews* fell under the Dominion of the *Romans*, who made *Herod* King over *Judea*; and it was this *Herod* that reigned when *JESUS CHRIST* came into the World.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Birth of JESUS CHRIST; of his Life and Death, his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven.

THE Time in which *GOD* had resolved to send his Son being come, *JESUS CHRIST* was born in *Judea*; and many Things fell out, that made his Birth remarkable: Nevertheless, he did not quickly make himself known to the *Jews*; nor did he begin to exercise his Ministry before he was Thirty Years of Age, and that he had been baptized by *John* the Baptist, his Forerunner. We have the History of the Life of *JESUS CHRIST* in the Gospel, and

and there are three Things principally to be considered in this History, *viz.* The Doctrine of JESUS CHRIST, his Miracles, and the Holiness of his Life. The Doctrine he preached was most holy, and tends only to the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind. He wrought a great Number of Miracles, which manifested an infinite Power and Goodness. By these Miracles he has made it appear, that he was the Son of God, and that his Doctrine was true. His Life was perfectly holy. We may find therein an Example of all Kind of Virtues, and particularly of an admirable Charity and Humility, of an extraordinary Zeal, and of a perfect Indifference for the World.

JESUS having lived after this Manner among the *Jews*, for about the Space of four Years, they crucified him, and put him to Death at the Feast of the Passover: But he rose again the third Day after his Death; and forty Days after his Resurrection he ascended into Heaven, where he sits at the right Hand of God; and from whence he sent the Holy Ghost to his Apostles upon the Day of *Pentecost*.

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

*Of the Preaching of the Apostles, and the
Establishment of the Christian Religion.*

THE Apostles having received the Holy Ghost in the City of Jerusalem, began to preach the Gospel there, and to confirm their Doctrine by Miracles. At first, they preached only in Judea, and to none but Jews; but God having made known to them, that the Christian Religion ought to be taught to all Men, they went to preach the Gospel throughout the World. The Apostles met with Jews in almost all the Places where they came, this Nation having been dispersed for a long Time in divers Countries. It was to the Jews of the Dispersion, that the Apostles did at first address themselves, as the Book of Acts shews us; and it was to them that they wrote many Epistles. Nevertheless they invited all Sorts of People, without Distinction, as well Gentiles as Jews, to the Profession of the Gospel; and they baptized all those that would become Christians, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Ghost. This is the Substance of the Doctrine which the Apostles and other Ministers of JESUS CHRIST did preach; namely, that there is but one only God, who created Heaven and Earth; that this true God, who had not been sufficiently known till then, had made himself known to Men by JESUS CHRIST his Son: that this JESUS, who was crucified by the *Jews*, was risen again; that he was the Saviour of the World, the Judge of all Men, and that all those who would believe in him, should be eternally happy. This Doctrine was preached by the Apostles with such wonderful Success, that in a few Years Christianity was established in the principal Parts of the World.

As for the *Jews*, they were destroyed and drove out of their Country, forty Years after the Death of our LORD. The City of *Jerusalem* was taken by the *Romans*, and with the Temple there, laid in Ruins, as JESUS CHRIST had expressly foretold; the Judgments of God fell upon the *Jews*, who were dispersed throughout the World; and since that Time, they have never been able to

recover

recover that Destruction, but it continues upon them to this Day.

C H A P. IX.

An Abridgment of the Christian Religion.

BUT in order to have a more exact Knowledge of the Religion, preached by the Apostles, it must be known, that they required two Things from Men, and promised them also two Things.

THE two Things which the Apostles required were, that Men should Believe, and that they should amend their Lives. They required in the first Place, that Men should believe in God, and in JESUS CHRIST; that the *Gentiles* should forsake their Religion, and the Service of false Deities, and adore and serve none but the true God, the Creator of the World; that the *Jews* should acknowledge JESUS CHRIST for the Messias promised by the Prophets; and that *Jews* and *Gentiles* both, should believe that JESUS CHRIST came into the World for the Salvation of Men, to make Atonement for their Sins, to deliver

deliver them from Condemnation and Death, and to purchase for all them that believe in him, a Title to eternal Life; that they should receive his Doctrine as true, and that they should persevere in the Profession of it. The other Thing which the Apostles required was, that those who till then had lived very wickedly, should amend their Lives, and renounce their Sins, of which the principal were, Impiety, Impurity, Intemperance, Cruelty, Covetousness, Injustice, Pride, Evil-speaking, the Love of the World, and Self-love. Those who were made Christians, renounced these Sins in receiving Baptism; and they promised to live in the Practice of Virtue and Holiness, and to obey the Commandments of JESUS CHRIST; which may be reduced to these three Heads, Piety towards GOD, Justice and Charity towards our Neighbour, and Temperance in regard to ourselves.

UPON Condition that Men would acquit themselves of these two Duties, and would give Evidence of their Faith and Repentance, the Apostles promised them two Things: First, that all their past Sins, committed in the Time of

their

their Ignorance, should be pardoned: secondly, that God would receive them to his Covenant, and grant them Salvation and Life eternal. These are the two Things that the Apostles gave Men Assurance of by Baptism; but as for those that refused to become Christians, or that being Christians, did not live as JESUS CHRIST had ordained, the Apostles declared, that they should be excluded from Salvation, and were subject to Condemnation and Death eternal.

★ *THIS* is the Sum of the Christian Religion, as it was preached by the Apostles. It is our Duty to adhere constantly to it, to love it, to do according as it directs, living godly in this World, and expecting our Salvation from the Mercy of GOD; that so, when JESUS CHRIST shall come at the last Day to render to every one according to his Works, we may escape the Punishments which this Religion threatens wicked People with, and partake of that Glory and everlasting Happiness which it promises to the Faithful.

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